

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 IO-10 ISO-00 SAM-01 CIAE-00

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PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 /095 W

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FM AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

TO AMEMBASSY MADRID NIACT IMMEDIATE

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3867

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

UNCLAS NOUAKCHOTT 1073

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, MR, SS, MO, SP, AG

SUBJECT: MAURITANIAN PRESIDENT COMMENTS ON SPANISH SAHARA

1. PRESIDENT OULD DADDAH GAVE EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW MAY 30 TO  
AFP CORRESPONDENT ON SUBJECT OF SPANISH SAHARA. FOLLOWING  
ACCOUNT WAS CARRIED IN MAY 31 GOVERNMENT NEWSSHEET, NOUAKCHOTT  
INFORMATION. PRESIDENT SAID MAURITANIA WILL TAKE ALL APPROPRIATE  
MEASURES IN ORDER TO PRESERVE ITS LEGITIMATE RIGHTS IN THE  
SAHARA, WHICH IT CONSIDERS AS PART OF ITS TERRITORY, IN THE  
EVENT SPANISH ADMINISTRATION IS WITHDRAWN FROM THE TERRITORY.  
SHOULD THIS HAPPEN, HE ADDED, "I AM CERTAIN THAT THE INTERESTED  
COUNTRIES WILL FIND A REASONABLE SOLUTION NOT ONLY FOR THE  
SAHARAOUIS POPULATION BUT FOR THE REGION."E2. OULD DADDAH, WHO INDICA  
TED THAT THE GIRM IS FHXDING  
AN OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONHOO THE UN, EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT OVE  
SPANISH MAY DECIDE O EJTHER PRESENCE IN THE WESTERN  
SAHARA IF THE PROCESS OF SELF-DETERMINATION IS RETARDED.  
HE SAID MAURITANIA IS DEFINITE ON THE MATTER OF DECOLONIALIZATION  
BUT STATED THAT SPAIN MUST NOT "FLEE ITS PRESENT RESPONSIBILITIES  
OF ADMINISTRATIVE POWER."

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3. THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT, ADDED THE PRESIDENT, "HAS SOME RESPONSIBILITIES AS A RESULT OF ITS PRESENCE IN THE SAHARA AND ALSO BECAUSE IT MUST FOLLOW THE EDICTS OF THE UN UNTIL THE ICJ MAKES PUBLIC ITS CONCLUSIONS. OULD DADDAH EXPRESSED SURPRISE THAT THE ICJ HAD FOUND A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE POSITIONS OF MOROCCO AND MAURITANIA ON THE QUESTION OF THE WESTERN SAHARA BY ACCORDING AN AD HOC JUDGE TO MOROCCO BUT NOT TO MAURITANIA. HEHDDDED, HOWEVER, THAT IT IS ONLY A QUESTION OF PROCEDURE AND THE MOST IMPORTANT DECISION IS THE DEFINITIVE RESPONSE OF THE COURT TO TWO QUESTIONS. "WAS THE SAHARA "TERRA NULLIUS"? AND "WHAT ARE THE LEGAL TIES OF THIS TERRITORY WITH MOROCCO AND MAURITANIA?"

4. IN CONCLUSION, OULD DADDAH CONFIRMED THAT THE RECENT TRIP TO MOROCCO AND ALGERIA BY MAURITANIAN FOREIGN MINISTER HAMDI OULD MOUKNASS WAS FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSING THE WESTERN SAHARA QUESTION WITH THE GOVERNMENTS OF THESE TWO COUNTRIES. THE ARTICLE IN NOUAKCHOTT INFORMATION ADDED THAT, ACCORDING TO A SOURCE CLOSE TO THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, THE LETTER CONTAINING THE OFFICIAL MAURITANIAN REACTION TO RECENT EVENTS IN THE SAHARA IS ADDRESSED TO THE UN SECRETARY GENERAL.

5. COMMENT: THIS IS THE FIRST PUBLIC COMMENT ON THE SPANISH SAHARAN QUESTION BY MAURITANIA IN MANY MONTHS. WE NOTE THAT OULD DADDAH CAREFULLY REFERS TO THE TERRITORY AS "WESTERN SAHARA". HANDY SIDE

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